United Nations A/ES-10/191–S/2002/933

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 August 2002

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

Letter dated 14 August 2002 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I would like to draw your attention to some disturbing developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem.

In recent weeks, Israel has intensified its illegal practices of collective punishment of the Palestinian people, in blatant violation of its obligations under international humanitarian law. Israeli troops have demolished more than 20 homes belonging to the families of alleged Palestinian militants. They have also detained several of their family members and are now attempting to forcibly transfer some of them from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip. These measures are in clear violation of the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

The occupying Power prefers not to heed the calls of the international community for restraint in its actions on the ground. It carries on its policy of extrajudicial assassinations of Palestinian militants, it routinely reoccupies Palestinian population centres, imposing curfews and demolishing houses and other Palestinian property at will. Thousands of Palestinians are currently being detained, without clear charges and due process. Settlement activity continues and the armed settlers are allowed to take the law in their own hands, commandeer Palestinian houses, as happened in the incident in Luban al-Sharqiyah, in the southern West Bank, on 11 August, and even kill innocent civilians, as in the case of the Palestinian girl in Hebron on 28 July. By pursuing such practices, Israel also demonstrates its utter disrespect for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, which, at their Conference at Geneva on 5 December 2001, reaffirmed the applicability of the Convention to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and called upon the occupying Power to fully and effectively respect it and refrain from perpetrating any violation of it.

02-52436 (E) 150802

The humanitarian situation on the ground has reached disastrous proportions. In spite of this, Israel complicates the efforts of international humanitarian agencies working to bring about the much-needed relief. In this context, I would like to welcome the appointment and dispatch to the region of your Personal Humanitarian Envoy, Catherine Bertini, with the mandate to assess the nature and the scale of the humanitarian crisis facing the civilian population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Alleviating the hardships of the Palestinian people is an urgently needed step, but cannot in itself bring about the end of violence. Political negotiations have to be restarted promptly, with clear benchmarks and a strict time frame, for the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) and the principle of "land for peace". The universally endorsed vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace, within secure and recognized borders, should be realized as soon as possible. I would like to appeal to you, Mr. Secretary-General, as well as to the members of the Security Council and the entire international community, to intensify efforts that would help the parties move in this direction.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Papa Louis **Fall**
Chairman
Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People